

River and Recreation Area, and the Saint Croix National Riverway. I've urged Minnesotans to visit these sites during this week and to gain a greater appreciation for opportunities they offer.

Mr. President, our parks remain one of America's most important legacies for future generations and a constant reminder of the progress, splendor, and triumphs of our past.●

PROFESSOR ROBERT KERN

● Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Kern, a longtime professor at the University of New Mexico where he is head of the European section of the history department. With a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, Dr. Kern's studies, teachings, and writings are centered on Iberian history, and the history of labor in various societies. In nearly 35 years of teaching at UNM, he has earned a well-deserved reputation as a thoughtful professor and a distinguished writer.

Believing that teaching is just about the noblest profession anyone can undertake, and coming from a family of teachers myself, I admire more than I can say what Professor Kern has done in this career. As a father, I admire more than I can say the fine job he did raising his sons, one of whom, Josh, worked on my staff for several years. The love, care, and attention Robert Kern gave his boys is reflected in their own lives and I suspect that of all of his achievements in a life well-lived, they are his pride and joy.●

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA'S FIRST CHAPTER IN RUTLAND, VERMONT

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President. Two years ago, I stood before you as the proud sponsor of a resolution commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). Today I am here to honor the 20th anniversary of VVA's first chapter—born and raised in my home town of Rutland, Vermont.

Twenty years ago, Vietnam Veterans were suffering under the wave of anti-Vietnam sentiment that had swept the nation. Little recognition was given to their sacrifices during the war. And in fact, there was even a great deal of official denial about the extent of the price that had been paid by these veterans, both physical and emotional. It would be years before Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder would be a recognized condition for many veterans and years before the Federal Government would admit that use of Agent Orange had left a terrible legacy of continued suffering for our veterans. The founders of the VVA felt that they must have an

organization to speak directly to those needs. The outpouring of enthusiasm from the veterans themselves demonstrated the depth of these feelings.

In 1979, during a trip to Vermont, VVA founder Bobby Muller met Don Bodette. Don supported the notion of an organization of and for Vietnam era veterans, but felt that it would only be truly successful if they mobilized locally and established chapters. The power of Don's logic and commitment persuaded Bobby Muller to adopt his model. On April 13, 1980, VVA Chapter One was established in Rutland, Vermont. Taking up the challenge, Don was joined by Jake Jacobsen, Albert and Mary Trombley, Mike Dodge, Dennis Ross and Mark Truhan, to name a few. Today, April 13, 2000, VVA Chapter One has 120 members hailing from 19 states and 3 other countries.

I would like to add my voice to the multitudes both in and outside of Vermont who are celebrating this auspicious anniversary. I join in recognizing the tremendous work done by the VVA, both in Vermont and nationally. As a Vietnam era veteran myself, we all owe a debt of gratitude to VVA Chapter One's farsighted founders and the committed members who have followed their lead. Happy 20th Birthday, Chapter One! May you have many more!●

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEN UP DAY

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, nearly 30 years ago, my predecessor, the late Senator George D. Aiken, rose to report to the Senate on a new Vermont initiative called "Green Up Day." He described an effort, then in its second year, in which thousands of Vermont citizen volunteers of all ages combed the streets, highways, back roads, and village greens to pick up litter and beautify their state.

Another distinguished colleague of mine, Senator Robert Stafford, kept these same Vermonters' thoughts in mind when he courageously led this Senate in the fight to build strong national environmental policies—including Superfund—to protect public health, air, water, and land.

The very first Green Up Day was a simple initiative born on April 18 of 1970—a few days before the first Earth Day. Today it is an annual Vermont tradition. On May 6, 2000, thousands of Vermonters will celebrate the official 30th anniversary of "Green Up Day" just as they have for so many years—by picking up trash bags and devoting their day to the beautification and clean up of our Green Mountain State.

Over the years, one organization, Vermont Green Up, has diligently coordinated volunteers and spread the ideas of Green Up Day. Vermont Green Up has sponsored annual poster contests for students, cleaned up several

illegal dumps, and helped other states—and even other countries—organize their own "Green Up" efforts.

In fact, my own daughter, Alicia, thought so much of Vermont Green Up that she served as their Executive Director for a few years. Alicia had the pleasure of serving in that position with Bob Stafford on the board. She also made sure her father was out picking up trash with her on Green Up Day!

I congratulate Vermont Green Up, the financial sponsors supporting Green Up Day, and the thousands of Green Up Day volunteers. These are the people who continue to make the first Saturday in May an extraordinary day for Vermont's environment. The fact that we are now celebrating the 30th anniversary of Green Up Day is a testament to these Vermonters untiring dedication to the environment of our Green Mountain State.●

CALHOUN COUNTY CELEBRATES CHARACTER EDUCATION AWARENESS WEEK

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a very special event taking place next week in the State of Michigan. The city of Battle Creek and the greater Calhoun County are officially recognizing April 17–21, 2000, as Character Education Awareness Week. Character Unlimited, a group which works to raise awareness of the importance of good character and to train others to integrate character development in their organizations and areas of influence, and the Battle Creek Chamber of Commerce are cosponsors of the event.

Four goals have been set for the week: first, to inform the public about character education initiatives throughout Calhoun County; second, to raise awareness and interest in the importance of mentoring and role modeling; third, to address youth about the importance of character based decision making and non-violent conflict resolution; and, finally, to raise community awareness of Character Unlimited and the work of the organization.

Increasingly, the notion of character has found a place in the national dialogue, particularly in this, an election year. What is getting lost in the debate, I feel, is a look at where character comes from, how it is developed within children and adults alike, and the role communities can play in developing character within their youth. Good character is not innate, Mr. President, it requires conscientious education, effort and role-modeling.

While it goes without saying that parents hold the most important role in this process, they are not the only cog in the wheel. Schools, youth organizations, churches, synagogues, temples, civic organizations, even governmental organizations, all of these groups have the opportunity to set